

DESIGNATION REPORT



+ - ALADDIN CITY/HIGGINS HOUSE
16265 S.W. 210 TERRACE (SINBAD STREET)
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33187



METROPOLITAN DADE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

METROPOLITAN DADE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
DESIGNATION REPORT—INDIVIDUAL SITE

Designation No
Date of Filing
Date of Designation

Owner(s)

Charles and Joan Hermanowski

Mailing Address

16265 S.W. 210 Terrace
Miami, Florida 33187

SURVEY FINDINGS:

☐ H.A.B.S. ☐ Natl. Reg. ☐ H.A.E.R. ☐ Other:
☐ Dade County Historic Survey Findings:
RATING: ☐ Architecture ☐ History ☐ Context NA

SITE LOCATION:

16265 S.W. 210 Terrace
Miami, Florida

Aladdin City PB 23-5
Lot 19 Blk 51 &
W310 FT TR 51 PB 34-56
Lot size 1.78 AC
OR 12006-1829 1283 5

Current Zoning (describe):

GU-Interim-uses depend on character of neighborhood, otherwise
EU-2 Standards apply (EU-2-estates 1 family 5 acre gross)

SIGNIFICANCE

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeology-Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> People |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Political Environment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (special) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | | |

Significance -- Brief summary including documentary evidence that indicates the historical, architectural or archeological significance of the site.

The Higgins House may be one of only several structures remaining that were associated with the 1926 real estate venture known as Aladdin City. The property on which the Higgins House stands was originally owned by Harry C. Higgins, one of the principal developers of Aladdin City. Historical research does not indicate whether the Higgins built the house or ever lived in it. However, based on the date of construction, location, and the unusual architectural style, it may be concluded that the house was constructed at the same time Aladdin City was being developed, perhaps as a model to attract buyers to the development.

During Miami's real estate boom in the mid 1920s many small developments sprang up in the area, some more successful and enduring than others. Miami Shores, Coral Gables, Miami Springs, and Opa-locka were among the more lasting. Others, such as Paoli Park, Mirador, Flagler City, Poinciana, and Alameda were short-lived. Aladdin City, in south Dade County near Hainlin Mill Drive and Southwest 162nd Avenue, falls somewhere between two categories: it wasn't very successful, but parts of it have endured through the years.

At the height of the real estate boom in south Florida, developers used a variety of approaches to publicize their suburbs and attract buyers. One such method was the creation of a "thematic" community that employed an architectural style or theme to unify the city appearance. The use of themes as a promotional tool to lure prospective buyers became a common practice in south Florida during the boom period. Notable among these efforts were Glenn Curtiss' and James Bright's two developments: the Spanish Mission-style town of Hialeah and the Pueblo-revival community of County Club Estates, later known as Miami Springs. George Merrick used Mediterranean-style architecture to provide an easily recognizable image for his new city.¹

¹Dade County Historic Preservation Division, From Wilderness to Metropolitan, Metropolitan Dade County, Miami, Florida, 1982, pp. 75-109,

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET ☒

The developers of Aladdin City capitalized on the name created as an Arabian/Moorish motif for their city. Will and Florence Sovereign were the principal developers of Aladdin City. Will's brother, O.E. Sovereign, was also involved in the venture as were Cline Bagwell, W.J. Lampert, Frederick Keith, and Harry C. Higgins.² According to Mrs. Harry Higgins, "the Higgins family took everything they had and borrowed \$10,000 to put into the project".³ The Sovereigns owned the Aladdin Company, located in Bay City, Michigan, which manufactured "redi-cut" prefab houses. They named the new city after their home building company.

In keeping with the Arabian theme, streets were given such names as Bagdad, Mustapha, Sinbad, and Ali-Baba Circle. Newspaper advertisements portrayed a genie with a vision of Aladdin City escaping from his magic lantern. Another boomtime development, Opa-locka in north Dade County, was also incorporating the Arabian theme and the advertisements for both cities were almost identical. Interestingly, both developments ran their first newspaper advertisement on the same day, January 3, 1926, back to back on the same page. Opa-locka's city plan may have been based on Ebenezer Howard's concept of garden cities which was receiving publicity in the United States at the time.⁴ Opa-locka incorporated various aspects of the garden city idea such as distinct zoning for residential areas, shopping, industry, and recreation. Each homeowner was given a plot on which to grow food. Opa-locka was intended to be a self-contained community offering employment opportunities in manufacturing, construction, and service industries. No original city plan has been discovered that would allow for a direct connection between Aladdin City and the garden cities concept, however, there is a similarity between the street layout for Aladdin City and Opa-locka.

Newspaper articles described Aladdin as a seven million dollar project which would turn into "a new, beautiful and modern city surrounded by an old established agricultural community".⁵ The city was to have such amenities as electric lights and power, local and long distance telephone service, sidewalks in front of every lot, public park and recreation grounds, and "the purest drinking water on every homesite". All streets were to be "sixty feet wide, paved and oiled, with electric lighted boulevards one hundred feet wide".⁶ An attractive feature of the city was its close proximity to the Seaboard Air Line Railroad's new extension.

²"Start Work on Aladdin City" in the Homestead Enterprise, January 1, 1926.

³Winans, Joy, "Aladdin's Lamp Wouldn't Burn" in the Miami Herald, April 24, 1960, p.4F.

⁴Howard, Ebenezer, Garden Cities of Tomorrow, Cambridge, Massachusetts, M.I.T. Press, 1965.

⁵Miami Daily News and Metropolis, miscellaneous advertisements for Aladdin City, January 3-January 17, 1926.

⁶Ibid.

A station house was erected in 1926 which employed one agent for the area.

Pre-opening sale prices for lots in Aladdin City ranged from \$750⁷ for residential sites, \$1,750 for business sites, and \$3,000 for apartment sites.

Aladdin City held its grand opening on January 14, 1926 and the festivities included free transportation to the area, picnics, and the building of a house in one day. Classes at local schools were cancelled so everyone could watch this unimaginable feat. Building materials were delivered by airplanes. The completed house included plumbing, wiring, plaster, paint, and home furnishings. Unfortunately for Aladdin City, the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables held its grand opening the following day and the Miami Daily News devoted entire pages to this event, with little or no mention of Aladdin City. A subsequent advertisement for Aladdin stated that 874 homesites were sold on opening day. Due to the huge success of the first day's sales, the Aladdin Company announced it would soon be erecting a branch office and a mill in the area to keep up with the demand for new houses.

The grand plans for Aladdin City to develop into a large community never materialized. The height of the land boom in South Florida had passed and was slowly declining. A devastating hurricane in September, 1926 struck the final blow to many boomtime development. Jean Taylor, south Dade historian, recalled perhaps ten to twelve houses were actually built in Aladdin City and many under construction were never finished, as people moved away to be near the shopping centers of Homestead and other south Dade towns.⁹ According to pioneer Otis Gossman, a building known as the city hall was constructed and he and his young friends played inside it during the 1930s. The building was later used as a polling place for Redland residents but has since been torn down. The railroad station was used as a potatoe packing house until it was destroyed by a hurricane in the 1960s.¹⁰

The Aladdin City Subdivision was re-platted in 1934. The dirt roads were never paved and only 3 or 4 street signs remain which bear their original Arabian names. The streets wind through the subdivision which is overgrown with grass and weeds. Several houses are still standing, including the Higgins House, which display some Moorish Revival architectural details including flat roofs, crenellated parapets, and horseshoe arches. It is assumed that the houses were related to Aladdin City, perhaps constructed as models to attract buyers to the development. It does not appear that they are of the "redi-cut" prefab type which the Aladdin Company manufactured. But the houses may be the only ones remaining which were associated with the boomtime development of Aladdin City.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

⁹Taylor, Jean, Telephone Interview by Emily Perry Distarich, April, 1987.

¹⁰Gossman, Otis, "Aladdin City: Requiem for a Dream" in the Miami Herald, December 2, 1969.

Current Use (describe):

Residence

Current Condition:

☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Unexposed
☐ Unaltered ☒ Altered
☒ Original Site ☐ Moved _____

Physical Description of Site (see attached photos):

The Higgins House, like the Sovereign House, is a good representative example of the typical inexpensive suburban development houses built throughout Dade County during the real estate boom of the 1920's. In this case, the Moorish theme has been reinforced by alterations to the front porch windows and openings on the side of the carport. These openings have been given the new profile of a horseshoe arched transom. The front opening of the carport has been enclosed by wood and glass double French doors, which now serve as the front door. All other windows have been upgraded by modern replacements. The house is a small, simple structure of masonry construction, faced in rough textured stucco. The house is typical of the Mission style buildings popular at the time. There is a rectangular mass for the main structure, topped by a continuous parapet with silhouette accents at the corners and at the center of each elevation. In front, a lower mass projects from the main facade, serving as carport and front porch. This entry mass repeats the parapet detail of the main facade at a lower height. Behind the parapets the roofs are flat, as typical of this building type.

It is in the carport that the building reflects a Moorish inspiration. The carport is pierced on three sides by large openings with low pointed arches with returns, of Moorish deviation.

The property is enclosed by a black chainlink fence. There is a large satellite dish on the front of the property.

Impacts — Impact of the designation on proposed public improvements,
renewal projects or private development.

Designation would have the effect of bringing any plans for alterations to the property before the Preservation Board for review. Designation will not affect current zoning.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the designation of the Aladdin City/Higgins House as an individual historic site.

Special Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness:

Any special standards will follow the general guidelines as recommended for historic structures as detailed in the "Rules and Regulations for Review of Historic Site Designations and Issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness."

Bibliographic References:

- "Aladdin City to be Modern City in Near Future" in the Homestead Enterprise, January 12, 1926.
- "Aladdin City to Build Fast" in the Miami Daily News and Metropolis, January 8, 1926.
- "Aladdin Story Told" in the Miami Herald, January 17, 1926.
- Buck, Gladys, "Information Requested, Princeton, Florida", Federal Workers Program, (ca. 1937-1940), P.K. Younge Library Field Copy, pp. 2-3 (unpub.).
- "Build House in a Day at Aladdin City", in the Homestead Enterprise, January 15, 1926.
- Dade County, Florida. Records Office Deeds Abstracts.
- Dade County Historic Preservation Division. From Wilderness to Metropolis, Metropolitan Dade County, 1982.
- Gallion, Arthur and Simon Eisner, The Urban Pattern, New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1975.
- Gossman, Otis, "Aladdin City: Requiem for a 20s Boom Town" in the Miami Herald, December 2, 1969.
- Howard, Ebenezer, Garden Cities of Tomorrow, Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1965.
- Miami Daily News and Metropolis, miscellaneous advertisements for Aladdin City, January 3, 1926-January 17, 1926.
- Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl, Matrix of Man, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968.
- "Planes Carry Material for Aladdin Home" in the Miami Daily News and Metropolis, January 13, 1926.
- Rasmussen, Steen Eiler, Towns and Buildings, Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1949.
- "Start Work on Aladdin City" in the Homestead Enterprise, January 1, 1926.
- Survey File, Notes and unpublished manuscripts, Dade County ~~1926-1927~~ 1926-1927, Miami, Florida.

Title Verification (attach copy): Book 12006

Page No. 1892 Deed Type
Warranty Deed

Taylor, Jean. Telephone interview by Emily Perry Dieterich, April, 1987.

Taylor, Jean. Villages of South Dade. St. Petersburg, Florida: Byron Kennedy and Company, 1986.

Winans, Joy, "Aladdin's Lamp Wouldn't Burn" in the Miami Herald, April 24, 1960, p. 4F.

Draft Resolution Designating the Property:

WHEREAS, the Higgins House was built on land originally owned by the principal developers of Aladdin City,

WHEREAS, the Higgins House is associated with the 1926 boomtime development of Aladdin City,

WHEREAS, the Higgins House was built circa 1926,

WHEREAS, the Higgins House is a good example of the typical suburban development architecture in Dade County in that era,

WHEREAS, the Higgins House is located:

Aladdin City PB 23-5

Lot 19 Blk 51 &

W310 FT TR 51 PB 34-56

Lot size 1.78 AC

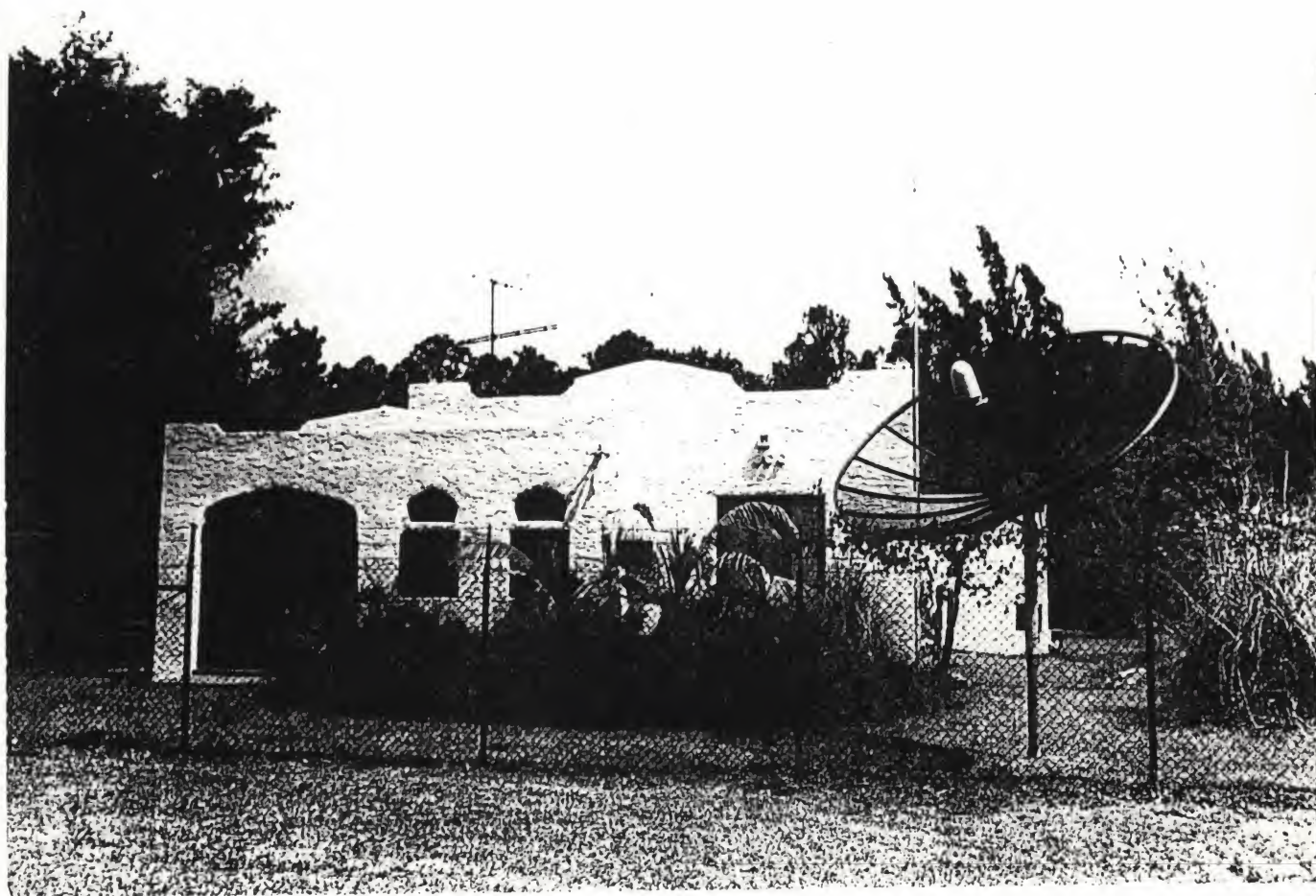
OR 12006-1829 1283 5

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Historic Preservation Board on Wednesday, June 17, 1987 has designated the Higgins House as an individual historic site pursuant to the Metropolitan Dade County Historic Preservation Ordinance (81-13) and that the Higgins House is subject to all rights, privileges and requirements, of that ordinance.

_____ is evidenced by the signature of the
Historic Preservation Board Chairman.



1. Aladdin City/Higgins House
2. 16265 SW 210 Terrace, Miami, Florida
3. Southwest view



1. Aladdin City/Higgins House
2. 16265 SW 210 Terrace, Miami, Florida
3. Front facade (south)

450

1983 DEC 22 PM 12:09

83R364131

Printed for Lawyers' Title Guaranty Fund Orlando, Florida

This instrument was prepared by

12006 1829

Name Joan A. Hermanowski Esq.

Address 17381 Old Currier Rd.

Miami, Fl.

33157

Deed

Deed, Made this 14th day of December 19 83 Between

CHARLES C. HERMANOWSKI, a married man, also known as
CHARLES HERMANOWSKI, a married man

of the County of Dade, State of Florida, grantor, and

Joan A. Hermanowski and Charles A. Hermanowski, as joint tenants
with right of survivorship
whose post office address is

of the County of Dade, State of Florida, grantees.

Witnesseth, That said grantor, for and in consideration of the sum of

One and 00/100

Dollars,

and other good and valuable considerations to said grantor in hand paid by said grantees, the receipt whereof is hereby
acknowledged, has granted, bargained and sold to the said grantees, and grantees' heirs and assigns forever, the following
described land, situate, lying and being in Dade County, Florida, to-wit:

Lot 19, Block 51 of Aladdin City, Plat No. 1, according
to the Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 23, Page 5,
and the West 310 feet of Tract 51, Revised Plat of
Aladdin City Plat No. 1, Plat Book 34, Page 56 of the
Public Records of Dade County, Florida.

This conveyance is subject to the following:

1. Conditions, restrictions, limitations and easements of record,
if any, but this provision shall not operate to reimpose the same.
2. Zoning and other governmental regulations.
3. Taxes and assessments for the year 1984 and subsequent years.

THIS PROPERTY IS NOT NOR HAS EVER BEEN HOMESTEAD PROPERTY.

and said grantor does hereby fully warrant the title to said land, and will defend the same against the lawful claims of all
persons whomsoever.

"Grantor" and "grantees" are used for singular or plural, as context requires.

In Witness Whereof,

Grantor has hereunto set grantor's hand and seal the day and year first above written.

Signed, sealed and delivered in our presence:

Joan A. Hermanowski
Maryanna C. Hoffman
Joy A. Hermanowski

Charles C. Hermanowski (Seal)

(Seal)

(Seal)

(Seal)

STATE OF Florida
COUNTY OF Dade

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this day before me, an officer duly qualified to take acknowledgments, personally appeared
Charles C. Hermanowski, also known as Charles Hermanowski

to me known to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged before me that
he executed the same.

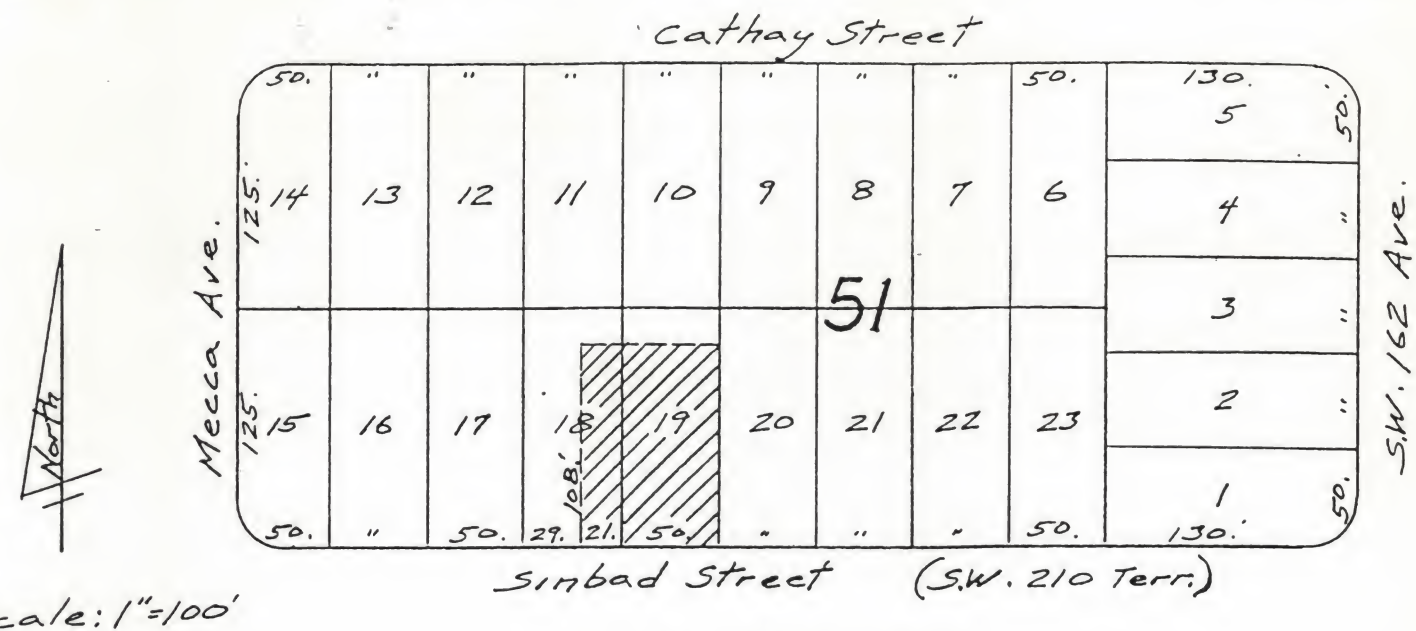
WITNESS my hand and official seal in the County and State last aforesaid this 14th day of December
19 83

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF FLORIDA
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES JUNE 25 1986
BONDED THRU GENERAL INS. UNDERWRITERS



RICHARD P. BRINKER
CLERK CIRCUIT COURT

30
W



SPECIFIC PURPOSE SURVEY
LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND SKETCH

The South 108 feet of Lot 19 and the South 108 feet of the East 21 feet of Lot 18, Block 51, ALADDIN CITY as recorded in Plat Book 23 at Page 5 of the Public Records of Dade County, Florida.

FOR: *Historic Preservation Division of Dade County, Florida*

Order #734

F.B. #25-54

June 13, 1987

I HEREBY CERTIFY: That the Specific Purpose Survey represented hereon meets technical standards set forth by the Florida State Board of Land Surveyors and is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

T.L. Riggs

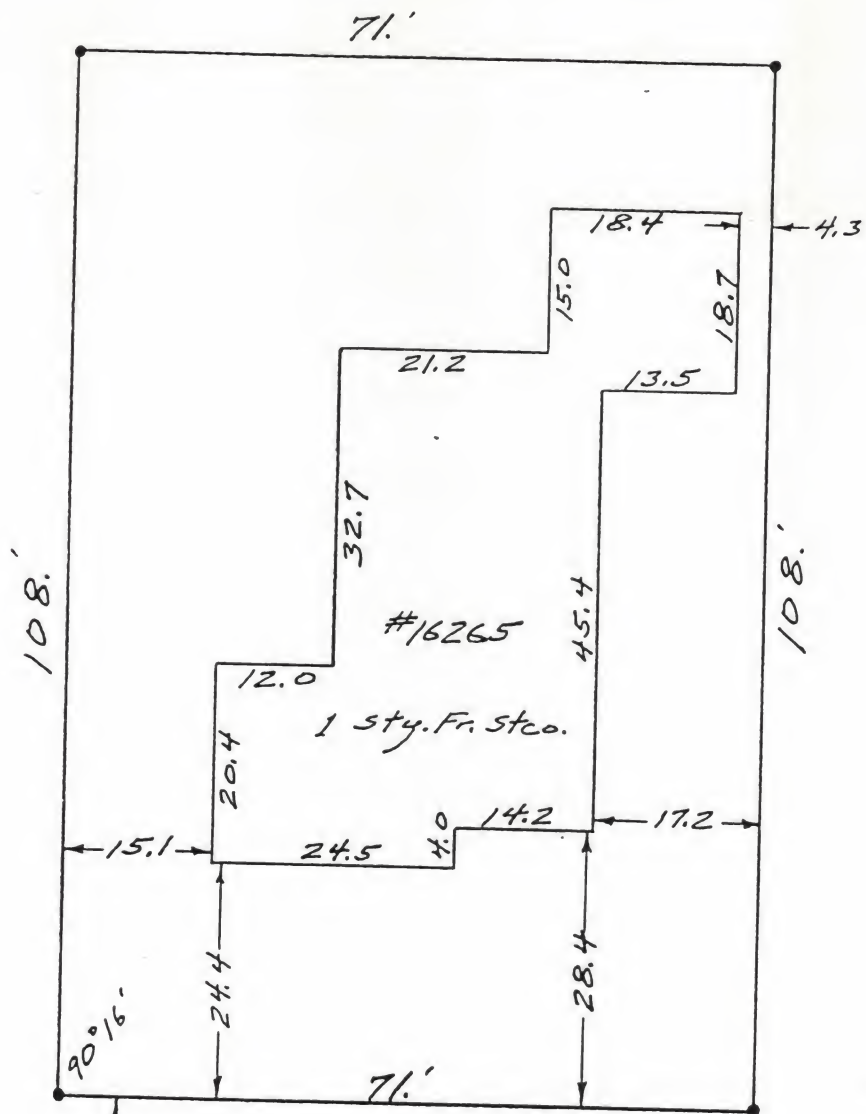
T.L. Riggs

* Registered Land Surveyor #2349

STATE OF FLORIDA

T. L. RIGGS
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR
P. O. BOX 330403
MIAMI, FL 33233-0403
TEL. (305) 448-9032

DC-33



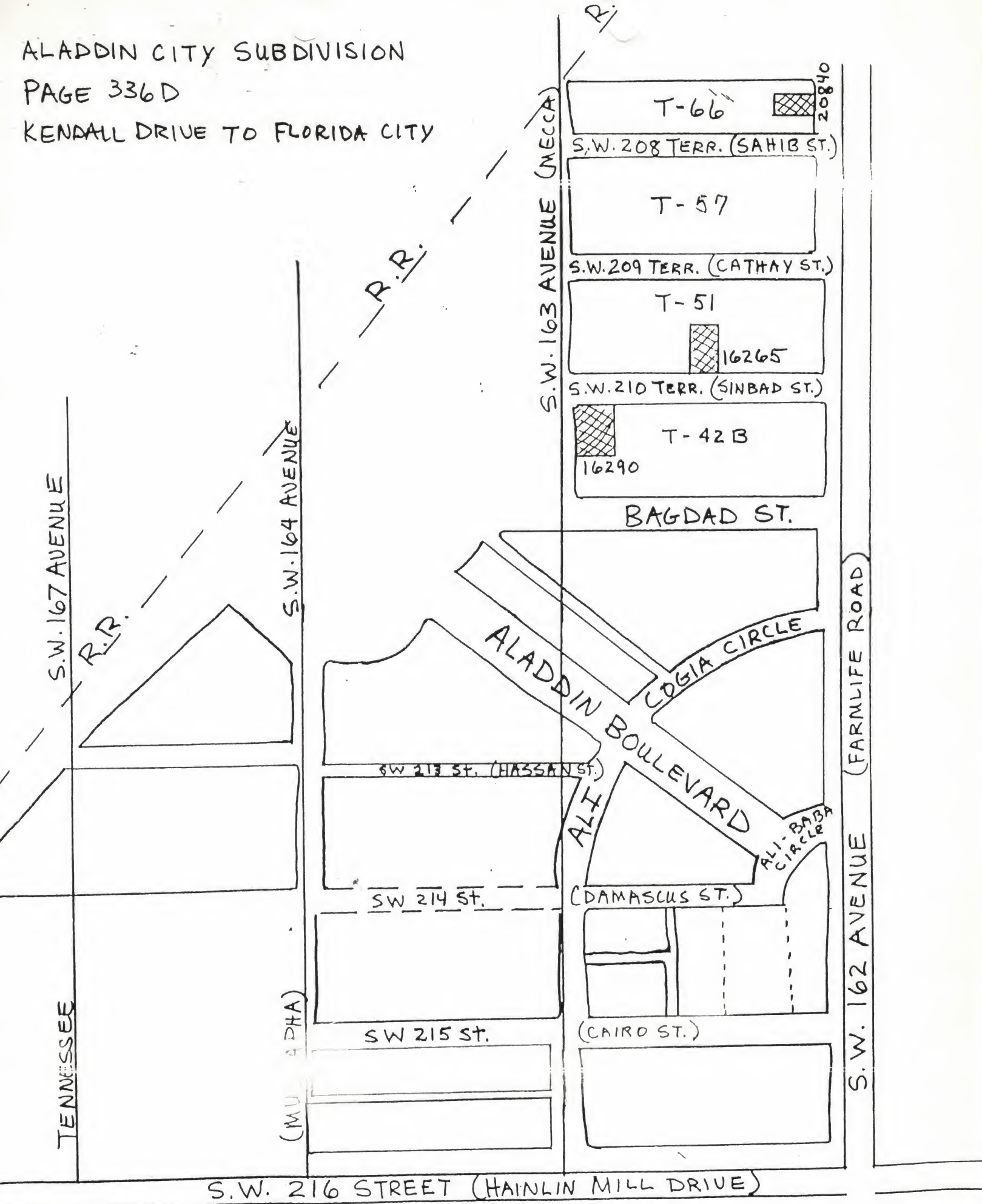
Scale: 1" = 20'

Sinbad Street (SW. 210 Terrace)

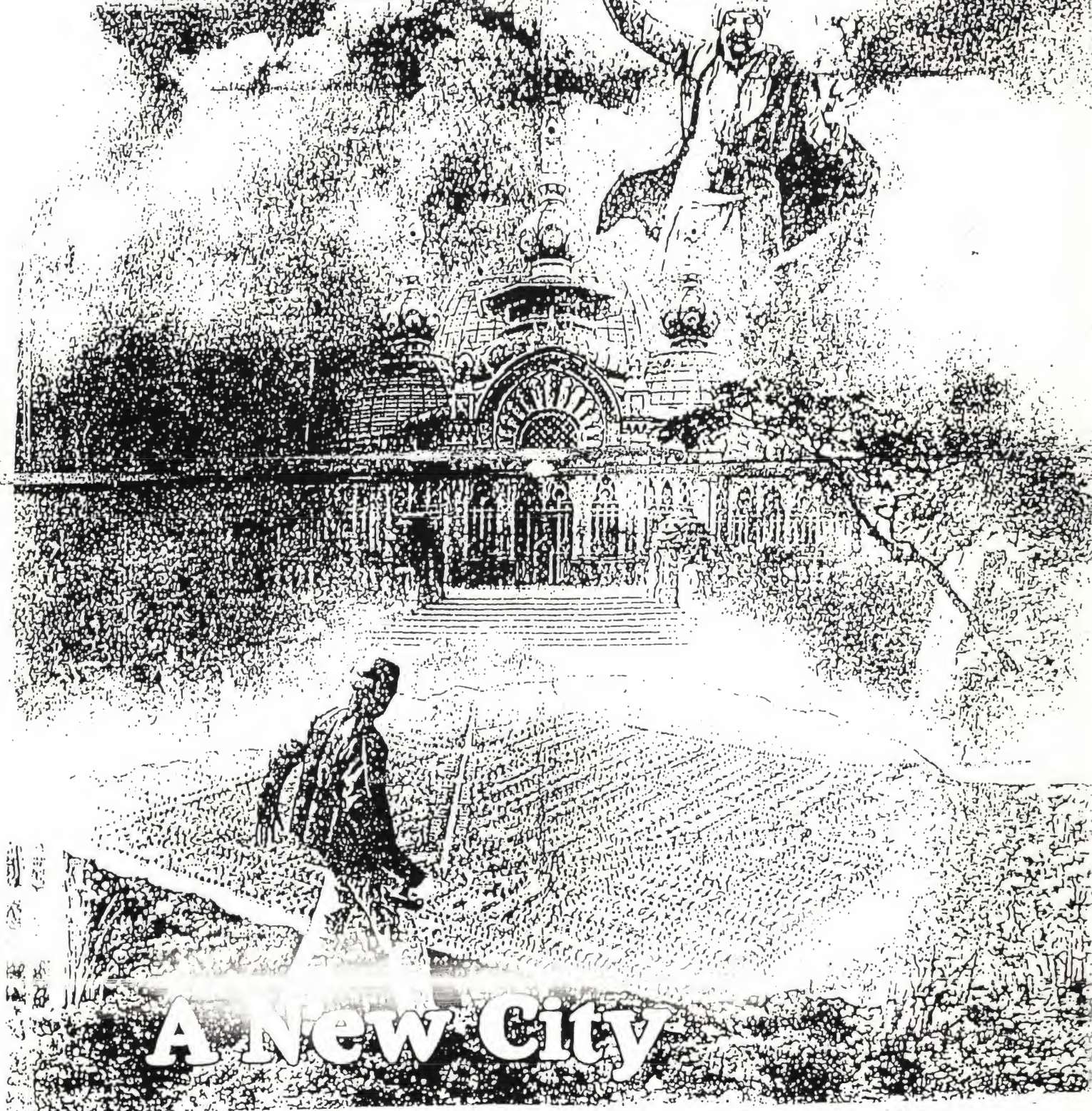
ALADDIN CITY SUBDIVISION

PAGE 336D

KENDALL DRIVE TO FLORIDA CITY

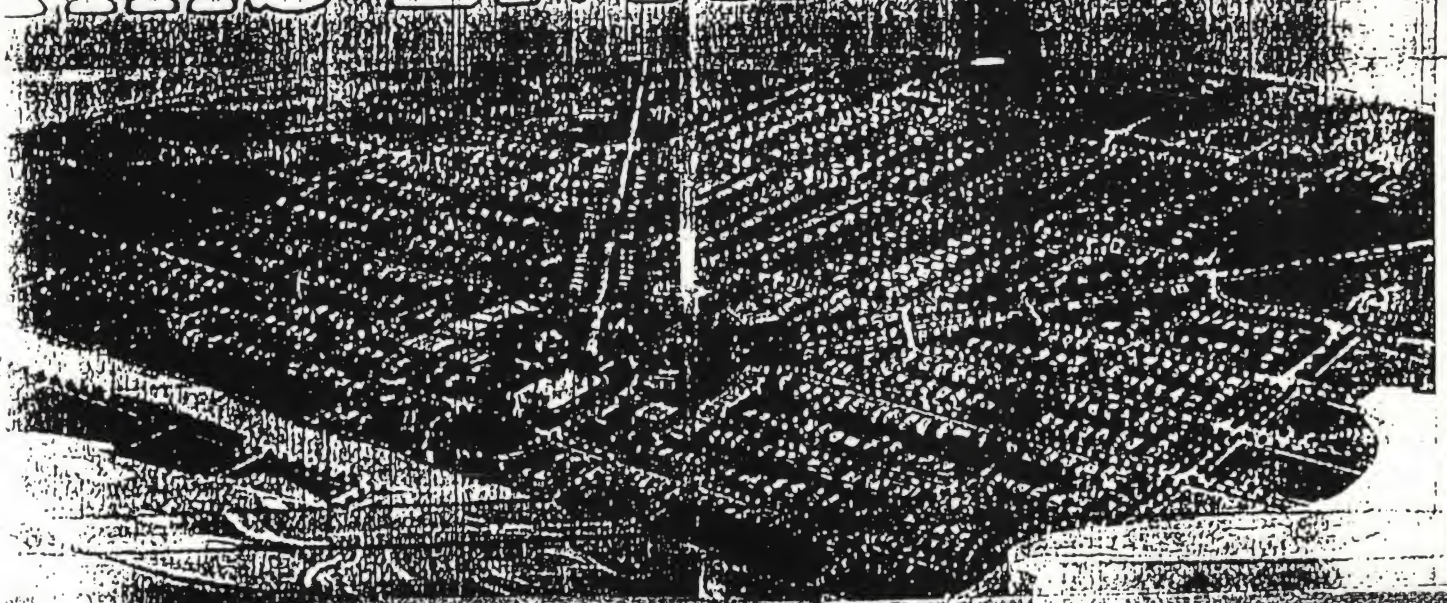


ALADDIN



ALADDIN PLANS

HIS ENTIRE CITY



A City of Homes
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*The Charm, Environ-
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Sought by Discrim-
inating Home
Builders*

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OPENING
ANNOUNCEMENT**



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Fruit Lands

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Resources and
Advantages Sought
by Discriminating
Investors*

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THIS GREAT
OPPORTUNITY**

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THE ALADDIN COMPANY

Manufacturers of Aladdin Houses

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ALADDIN CITY SALES CO.

203 HALCYON ARCADE

MIAMI, FLORIDA

OF BAY CITY,
MICHIGAN

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Irelene King, Administrative Secretary



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METRO-DADE COUNTY PROVIDES EQUAL ACCESS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN
EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICES AND DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP.